AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
SETTLEMENT
OF THE
NEW ZEALAND COMPANY

PETRE

919.31
Pet/Acc
88203

B.B.R.A.S.

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

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MAP
OF
THE COLONY
OF
NEW ZEALAND,
From Official Documents.
NEW ULSTER
NEW LEINSTER

AN ACCOUNT OF

THE SETTLEMENTS

OF THE

NEW ZEALAND COMPANY,

FROM PERSONAL OBSERVATION DURING

A RESIDENCE THERE.

88203

BY

THE HONBLE. HENRY WILLIAM PETRE.

FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER AND CO. 65, CORNHILL.
1842.

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CHAPTER I.

EXPEDITION AND SETTLEMENT OF THE FIRST COLONY.

THE main body of settlers composing the First Colony sailed from England in five large ships during the latter part of September 1839. They had been preceded in the months of May and August by two vessels. The first of these, the *Tory*, carried out the Company's principal agent, Colonel Wakefield, together with other servants of the Company, who was charged to select the seat of the intended settlement, to purchase lands there from the natives, and to make arrangements for the reception of a large body of settlers. The second preliminary vessel, the *Cuba*, conveyed the surveying staff of the Company, with a number of labourers. Before any intelligence was received from Colonel Wakefield, nine large emigrant ships, besides store-ships, sailed from England, with orders to touch at Port Hardy in D'Urville's Island for directions, which it was expected that Colonel Wakefield would convey thither, for proceeding to their ultimate destination. This was a bold proceeding on the part of the Company, and

still more so on that of the emigrants. It was attended, however, with complete success.

The five ships which sailed in September, reached Port Hardy, and were directed to Port Nicholson early in 1840. The *Oriental*, a fine ship of 506 tons, in which I embarked, entered Port Hardy on the 22nd of January. This is an excellent harbour, but the land surrounding it, though clothed with timber, consists of hills so high and steep as to be scarcely fit for settlement. The harbour was at the time of our arrival a complete solitude, with the exception of two or three natives who came to the ship in a canoe, but with whom none of us were able to hold conversation. We enjoyed ourselves by rambling about the shores of the harbour, and some of the party, who extended their walks to a considerable distance into the forest, imagined that they were the first Englishmen who had trod upon that ground. This proved to be an error; for Mr. Francis Molesworth and Mr. Dudley Sinclair discovered on the top of a very high hill which they had climbed, a pocket-book which had been lost there by one of the surveying staff during the previous visit of the *Cuba*. For some days this was the only circumstance from which we could conclude that either of the preliminary vessels had visited Port Hardy. Our anxiety on this head was, however, soon relieved. An Englishman, established as a whaler in another part of the island,

came to us with the information that Port Nicholson had been chosen as the seat of the first colony. We sailed immediately, and entered Port Nicholson on the 1st of February.

On arriving at the anchorage to which we were directed by the Company's agent, we found there the *Cuba* surveying vessel, and the *Aurora* emigrant ship, which last had sailed with us from the Downs. These ships gave us a salute of more, I believe, than any usual number of guns, which we returned with interest. The greater part of the cabin passengers and laborers by the *Aurora* were already established ashore; and in about a week the party by the *Oriental* had finally taken up their abode there. Our first habitations consisted entirely of very rude huts built by ourselves. At a later period after the arrival of the other emigrant ships, the natives rendered valuable assistance in this sort of work, at which they are very expert. It must be confessed that the huts built by them were much superior to those of our own handywork. Many of them indeed deserved to be called houses, and were, when I quitted Port Nicholson, still used by emigrants of all classes, none of whom, it may be safely said, suffered any serious inconvenience from the want of more comely dwellings.

Our reason for not immediately putting up the frame-houses which we had brought with us from England will be easily explained. The passage

of the *Cuba* with the surveyors had been most tedious, extending to 175 days; so that on the arrival of the emigrant ships, the survey of the site of the intended town had scarcely begun. Having to wait for our land until this survey should be completed, we were naturally unwilling to build up houses which must have been taken down again for removal after our land had been assigned to us. This delay in the survey was deemed a misfortune at the time, but turned out of great benefit to the settlers. While the survey was in progress, and during our residence in the neighbourhood as squatters waiting for our land, it became the opinion of a great majority of the emigrants, that the shore of Lambton Bay, at the other extremity of Port Nicholson, was in all respects far preferable to the banks of the river Hutt as the site of a commercial town. The Company's principal agent therefore determined that the town should be on the shore of Lambton Bay, and the surveyors were removed accordingly. This change has obtained the unanimous and decided approval of the settlers of every class.

In consequence of difficulties in the ground which is now called Wellington, and the inadequacy of the surveying staff, six months elapsed between the arrival of the first body of settlers, and the delivery of town-land to those who had purchased it in England. It will be supposed that during this period the settlers were wholly

inactive. If this had really happened, the loss and inconvenience occasioned by the impossibility of forming any permanent settlement, would have been greatly increased. The loss and inconvenience were great and very harassing to everybody; but we were not inactive. On the contrary, all were engaged in some active employment arising out of peculiar circumstances which I will endeavour to explain.

When Colonel Wakefield entered Port Nicholson, the only inhabitants of its shores were the natives of the country, with the exception of a single Englishman, who had lived amongst them for some years, and adopted their mode of life. Yet within a few weeks of our arrival, a considerable trade had grown up amongst us. Squatters as we were, we had stores of British goods, extensive dealings with the natives of our immediate neighbourhood and other parts of Cook's Strait, a bank which furnished us with a sufficient currency, and even a newspaper which was regularly published once a week. As respects trade, a stranger might have supposed that our squatting settlement had been established for years. The fact is, that many years before, a considerable trade had been established in New Zealand. It consisted of exchanges amongst the natives and various classes of Europeans; the commodities exchanged being on the one hand productions of the country, such as whale-oil and

bone, flax, timber, Indian corn, pigs and potatoes; and on the other tobacco, spirits, tea and sugar, clothes, hardware, and other goods required, either by the natives, or by the whaling ships and fishing stations. Of this established commerce, a portion immediately fell to the share of the settlers at Port Nicholson. The number of vessels of various sizes which entered the harbour, during the first year of the existence of the Colony amounted to one hundred and ten. It should be explained that many of these entered the harbour more than once in the twelvemonth, and that I have included every entry in the above number. Until Port Nicholson was inhabited by persons having goods for sale that were in demand in the islands, the centre of the New Zealand trade had been the Bay of Islands. This spot had been selected for the purpose, not on account of its centrical position, (for it is placed nearly at one extremity of the country, 800 miles long, formed by the New Zealand Islands,) but simply, because the first missionary stations were formed there, and some security for person and property was established by means of the residence of a consular officer of the British government, supported by visits from British men-of-war. Port Nicholson, on the other hand, is in the very centre of the islands. The seat of trade therefore was sure to change when Europeans settled at the latter place. As the commerce of Port Nichol-

son has increased, that of the Bay of Islands has fallen off. The attraction also of our larger capitals, and greater facilities of doing business, had no doubt some influence in bestowing upon us the trade which was lost to the Bay of Islands. This view of the case rests entirely upon the facts which have occurred.

It has been frequently stated in some of the newspapers of New South Wales and of this country, that the first settlers at Port Nicholson suffered great privations, and even sometimes were in want of food. There never was the slightest foundation for such statements. From the hour of our landing at Port Nicholson in February 1840, to that of my departure in March last, we were amply supplied with provisions. The Company's importations of flour were large and regular, and trade with the natives furnished us with such abundance of fresh pork and potatoes, that we never had to depend upon salt provisions: cattle and sheep were brought to us from New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, and latterly fresh meat was constantly on sale at the following prices: beef and mutton from eightpence to a shilling, and pork from four-pence to sixpence. Milch cows were sufficiently numerous to afford milk and butter for constant sale. Poultry and eggs were scarce, and of course dear. Fish taken in the harbour, of great variety and excellent quality, was at all times abundant. I

firmly believe that there never has been an instance in which the wants of the founders of a colony were so amply supplied from the beginning.

The principal danger to which it was imagined in this country we were exposed, was the hostility of the natives. Most of us had made anxious enquiries on this subject before we embarked, and our conviction was, that we should be received as friends by the natives, if our conduct towards them were just and friendly. Our most sanguine expectations were completely realized. Our numbers, indeed, astonished them, and they used frequently to ask whether our whole tribe, meaning thereby all the people of England, had not come to Port Nicholson. It is probable, also, that they were overawed by our obvious superiority to any physical force that could have been brought against us in case of disputes. But, however this may be, they received us in the most friendly manner. Their services for all sorts of purposes were always at our command for a moderate remuneration. We employed them chiefly in shooting, fishing, hunting, cutting fire-wood, and, as I have said before, building houses. At first they were content to be paid with food only. By degrees their wants increased, and they required various goods, such as tobacco, clothing, and hardware. All this took place at our first squatting settlement on the banks of the Hutt;

latterly, after the bulk of the settlers were established at Wellington, the natives had begun to require money wages in return for their labour. A similar change took place with regard to trade. At first all our exchanges with the natives were made by barter only, but long before my departure they had begun to comprehend the use and value of money. This knowledge at last extended in some cases to the regular employment of our currency. One native resident at Wellington purchased a horse which had been imported from New South Wales, and used to let it out for hire; and another had an account with the Bank. Great numbers were in possession of money, which they usually carried about with them in a handkerchief tied round the neck. During the first months of our intercourse with the natives, they usually carried muskets, but apparently from mere habit and not on account of any fear of violence from us. We never carried arms, and the custom has now been quite abandoned by the natives of Port Nicholson. The best proof, however, of their own feeling of security is, that they are gradually destroying the stockade defences of their villages. Not that they ever feared, probably, that we should attack them, but they feel that our presence is a perfect security against aggression from distant and hostile tribes. It seemed to me that the whole character of this people was undergoing a rapid change; that they

had sufficient intelligence to perceive the advantages of conciliating the settlers by orderly conduct, and of adopting our usages; and that in all probability the next generation will to a great extent amalgamate with the colonists. It is a pleasure to be able to state that the behaviour of the colonists generally towards the natives has been signally praiseworthy.

Drawn by Chs. Heaphy.

Engraved by J.C. Armytage.

PART OF LAMBTON HARBOUR, PORT NICHOLSON, NEW ZEALAND.

COMPREHENDING ABOUT ONE THIRD OF THE WATER FRONTAGE OF

THE TOWN OF WELLINGTON.

Published by Smith Elder & Co. Cornhill, London.

CHAPTER II.

RECENT PROGRESS OF THE COMPANY'S SETTLEMENTS.

When I quitted Port Nicholson in March last, the settlers had been in possession of their lands at Wellington about seven months, and the number of white inhabitants of the town was commonly estimated at three thousand souls. In my own opinion, this estimate was then somewhat excessive. What they had done at that time may be in some measure conceived from a view of a portion of the site of the town, recently published by Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. of Cornhill.* It represents about one-third of the water-frontage of Wellington, and less than a third of the inhabited parts of the town; and is a faithful picture of what actually existed at the time. Judging from the preparations which were then in progress for an increase of building, and from the number of settlers who must have since reached Port Nicholson, I cannot doubt that the town presents at this time a much more advanced appearance. It

* This view has been reduced and engraved to accompany these pages.

must not, however, be supposed, that all the emigrants would settle at Wellington. A road was begun and has been since completed, which would provide easy access from Wellington to the mouth of the Wanganui River; and here a settlement had already been commenced. The way from Port Nicholson to Wanganui, after passing the road which has been made from Wellington to the shore of Cook's Strait at Porirua, is by an extremely hard beach of sand, broken in only one place by rocks, which may be easily removed. The reports of various officers of the Company, who had walked from Port Nicholson to the neighbourhood of the Sugar-loaf Islands, where the settlement of New Plymouth has commenced, left no doubt that the way from the latter place to Wanganui was as easy as that from Wanganui to Port Nicholson. The number of persons who have emigrated directly from England to New Plymouth is 534. It may be considered, therefore, that the whole of the coast, from Port Nicholson to New Plymouth, has been opened for settlement. The progress, however, of the Company's Settlements, down to the time of my departure, is so fully and accurately described in a letter from Colonel Wakefield to the Company, of which I was the bearer, that I cannot do better than print it here.

Wellington, New Zealand,
Feb. 26, 1841.

Sir;—At the last moment, previous to the sailing of the *Cuba* for Valparaiso (by which route I hope my letters will reach you more speedily by means of the Panama steam communication, than if forwarded to Sydney,) I beg to give you, for the information of the Court of Directors of the Company, the latest accounts of the condition of the Colony, and a short retrospect of its first year's history.

The Directors will remember the disadvantageous circumstances under which the foundation of this Colony was laid. The disinclination of her Majesty's Government to introduce a system of Crown colonization, or to adopt or sanction that proposed by the Association and the Company, coupled with the disavowal of British sovereignty over New Zealand, rendered titles to land precarious, and the establishment of law and order a matter of extreme difficulty.

The first expedition despatched by the Company to this country acquired a vast territory in strict accordance with the hitherto recognized form of obtaining title to land herein, and with the usages of the aborigines. It, moreover, gave to the aborigines more than the full market and a satisfactory price for the land ceded; besides various tangible and moral advantages, including

reserves of land for their maintenance, schools, hospitals, and other establishments. This liberality, without precedent, I believe, in the history of colonization, justified a foreign power taking possession of a savage country in following the recognized customs of extinguishing native rights. Under these circumstances, the first Colony, consisting of 1,200 souls, arrived in this settlement.

I need scarcely recall to your recollection the instructions of the Court of Directors received by me, to recommend to the settlers an abandonment of the agreement entered into in England; or of the steps which we took to guard against any violation of our allegiance, by means of the native power sanctioned and approved of in the most formal manner by her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies. Deriving authority from that native power, the settlers, speedily after their arrival, formed themselves into a Council for the maintenance of law and order among her Majesty's subjects and the aboriginal population; but, upon the appearance at Port Nicholson of the acting Colonial Secretary of these Islands, the Council of Colonists suspended its sittings and functions, and the settlers unanimously greeted the arrival of a single subordinate magistrate as the harbinger of the rule of the British crown and legislature.

Again the infant settlement put forth its

strength, and, in conjunction with numerous arrivals from the neighbouring Colonies, showed what could be produced by combined capital and labour upon a field full of resources, such as we possess. Experience having proved the unfitness of the valley of the Hutt for a commercial city, the greater number of Colonists wisely removed their establishments to the other end of the bay. Our noble harbour received shipping to an extent unprecedented in the annals of so young a Colony, and gave signs that, as a port of entry and export, it would become, in union with our invaluable commercial supporters at home, the principal entrepot of this country.

A full meeting voted an address of congratulation and support to the Lieutenant-Governor, and to this, and to the offers of assistance by the Company, I received a courteous answer, declining, however, the proposals of both, as regarded his making this the seat of the local government. The Act of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, instituting a commission of inquiry into, and restricting the extent of the titles to the land—although such titles, if fairly acquired, had been guaranteed by repeated declarations of the Queen's Ministers,—threatened the stability of the settlement, and induced many to propose an abandonment of New Zealand for South America. A deputation from the settlers to Sir George Gipps, the Governor of New South

Wales, to whom the question of titles had been referred, received and brought to us satisfactory assurances from his Excellency of his high estimation of the body of settlers, and of the measures of the Company. These assurances, showing sound judgment and enlightened statesmanship, the want of which had been so apparent in the neglect and errors of the Home Government, revived confidence amongst us. Sir George Gipps ratified, so far as his power extended, the titles to land acquired by purchasers under the Company in the 110,000 acres first bought by them, subject only to the occupation of that extent in one continuous block. His Excellency refused to sanction the plan of selection by the first purchasers from all the Company's possessions, which would have been tantamount to the system of special surveys practised in other neighbouring Colonies.

The proposition of his Excellency was cordially accepted, and the settlers, assured of their titles to their purchases in the preliminary sections, proceeded vigorously to lay out their capital in calling into life the city of Wellington. It remains for Sir George Gipps to decide,—and there is no reason to anticipate a refusal,—whether the subsequent purchasers of land from the Company shall receive the same protection and privileges, in other blocks of land now in progress of settlement in the Company's possessions.

The number of settlers sent from England at the expense of the Company, together with those arrived from Australia, at this time exceeded two thousand souls. An impetus to enterprize had been given by Sir George Gipps' decision, and an union of purpose amongst the Colonists bade fair to push forward the settlement at a rate unanticipated by the most sanguine. Commerce, founded on the capital introduced from home and the other Colonies of this hemisphere, gave a life to the place similar to that of old countries. Mechanics and the labouring class obtained full employment at ample wages, in the erection of buildings and cultivation of the fruitful land in the neighbourhood of the harbour, whilst native labour and native produce realized to the fullest extent the value set upon them by the proposers and advocates of New Zealand colonization.

At this period of our history, when the fostering care of the Lieutenant-Governor might have been reasonably expected by the infant Colony now placed under his dominion, and become a recognised portion of the British Empire, (although until that recognition occurred, we had no right perhaps to expect protection from Government,) Captain Hobson struck a blow at the prosperity, and even existence of the settlement, which was as little sanctioned by the Governors of the neighbouring Colonies, as it was consistent

with justice and fair dealing. Although Sir John Franklin, the Governor of Van Diemen's Land, and the authorities of other adjacent Colonies, had expressly and pointedly disapproved of, and taken measures to prevent, the abstraction of workmen from one settlement for the benefit of another, Captain Hobson sent a vessel hither with offers of free passage, of temporary locations without rent, and of other inducements to the working classes to emigrate to the settlement now in progress in the Gulf of Shouraka, whither a difficult navigation, a doubtful harbour, and a barren district, have deterred any but some hungry officials and Bay of Islands land-expectants from bending their steps. The only apologies that can be offered for his proceeding are, that the recognition of the Company's title to the land acquired from the natives (who at the time of such acquisition were expressly acknowledged to have the full power of selling their territory) gives the Government a right to dispose of the labour sent out by the Company (by means of the 75 per cent. put apart for an emigration fund out of the proceeds of the sales,) in the same manner as if the importation of that labour into these islands had been defrayed out of the national emigration fund; and that the settlement at Auckland being in New Zealand, a seduction of labourers from Port Nicholson is not a fraudulent abstraction from one Colony to benefit another, such as is denounced

by Sir John Franklin, Colonel Gawler, and the settlers of every Colony which may be liable to injury from the same cause.

The first plea is answered by the fact of the Company having voluntarily expended on emigration 75 per cent. of its profits on the sale of land, purchased before the Government claimed a right to sell land in this country; and the second may be as easily disposed of, by asking whether Port Nicholson and Auckland, 400 miles apart, and separated by the East Cape, are not as much distinct and separate settlements as Port Jackson and Launceston; or to give more striking examples, as Launceston and Port Phillip, before the latter was made a separate Colony? The conduct of Captain Hobson has naturally given much uneasiness to those who, having expended capital here, fear a deficiency of labour, and universal disapprobation of it has consequently been strongly expressed; but the reliance upon the continuance of a supply of labour by the Company, and the fortunate plantation of the settlement a year in advance of that of Auckland, reassure all reasonable people as to the stability and bright prospects of this place.

Thirty soldiers sent hither from the Bay of Islands have been suddenly withdrawn to Auckland, much to the satisfaction of our settlers, to whom their drunken and disorderly conduct was a constant annoyance.

The above is a hasty but faithful sketch of the principal events in our first year's existence as a British Colony. Let us now glance at our present state and future prospects. These I cannot but regard as in a high degree satisfactory. It is established, almost beyond doubt, that the north side of Cook's Straits will be colonized by Englishmen in immediate connexion with the Company. A considerable number of settlers are already at Wanganui, preparing to select the land which has been surveyed for them with praiseworthy despatch, and which will be open for selection in a few days. Large reinforcements to their number may now be daily expected.

Proceeding higher up the Straits, we find the foundation of New Plymouth already laid in the vast and fertile district of Taranaki.* The Surveyor-General of the Plymouth Company, with assistants, is employed in marking out the site of the future city. From Taranaki and Wanganui, immense supplies of agricultural produce and of flax will be conveyed to Port Nicholson; and the fisheries on the coast will also become the source of much profitable employment. In anticipation of a large coasting trade, numerous small vessels

* The accompanying view of the site of New Plymouth is taken from a drawing made on the spot by one of the Company's surveyors.—H. W. P.

Engraved by J. C. Armytage.

PART OF THE NEW PLYMOUTH SETTLEMENT, IN THE DISTRICT OF TARANAKE, NEW ZEALAND.

SHEWING THE RANGE OF HOUSES RECENTLY BUILT BY THE NATIVES, IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ARRIVAL OF EMIGRANTS.

MOUNT EGMONT 30 MILES DISTANT.

Published by Smith, Elder & Co Cornhill, London.

are now building in the various harbours and inlets on both sides of the Straits.

It is impossible to over-rate the value of flax as a staple article of commerce; and the only impediment to the introduction of the *Phormium tenax* into Europe and America, has been removed by the discovery of a cheap method of preparing large quantities for export, in reduced bulk, and without injury to the fibre. A short time only will elapse before our settlement will provide a profitable return cargo for the foreign vessels visiting Cook's Straits. Already, and before the agricultural resources of the settlement have had time for development, the shipping belonging to Port Nicholson has become worth 5,000*l.*; and this is almost exclusively employed in bringing pigs and potatoes, in return for blankets, guns, and other articles sought after by the natives.

The houses erected in Wellington have cost at least 18,000*l.*; and the merchandise and provisions now in the place may be safely put down at not less than 200,000*l.* In every direction large stores and private dwellings are springing up. Within a few weeks, measures have been in progress for the erection of the large steam saw and flour mill, brought from England by Messrs. Hopper, Petre, and Molesworth. A company is formed with sufficient capital to carry on the business; and ships, not full of flax and oil, will be supplied with sawn timber for home consumption, and for the

neighbouring Colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land.

My confidence in the success of this settlement rests in no slight degree on the vigour with which many gentlemen are now employed in raising stock, and in farming operations. Even inferior land has produced some excellent wheat and barley, whilst some of that grown on the banks of the Hutt is the finest I ever saw. The importation of cattle from New South Wales supplies us with the means of increasing the best breeds. In enumerating the various sources of future prosperity, I ought not to omit the material advantage which may be expected from the operations of the Church Society. It is understood that the large property purchased from the Company by the Society will be improved by a judicious and liberal expenditure, with a view, not so much to immediate returns, as to the creation of a valuable estate a few years hence. Of the success of this experiment, under judicious management, there can be no doubt. In the meanwhile, the circumstance of the Society having fixed upon the Wellington district as the residence of the bishop and the site of a college, is of itself gratifying, and certain to be productive of benefit to the settlement.

All that has been said or written of the extraordinary healthiness of this place has been borne out by experience. I believe that every tem-

perate and well conducted person in the Colony is entirely free from disease of every description.

The pleasing circumstances mentioned would be comparatively worthless, did our rising settlement exhibit the spectacle, too common in new Colonies, of internal discord; but here again I find matter of congratulation. With no exception worth notice, the settlers on the Company's territory are on the most friendly terms with each other, and with the native population. The slight differences which occasionally will occur are soon adjusted.

More might be said on the different topics which I have touched upon, but more is not needed to satisfy the Directors of the increasing prosperity of the Colony. Difficulties of no ordinary nature have been overcome, and severe trials have proved the determination of the settlers to second manfully the exertions of their friends in England. On continued support from England perfect reliance is placed, although no longer absolutely necessary to the now fairly established Colony.

Neither is it unreasonable to expect a favourable change in the disposition of Government; but at the same time, it is on their own efforts, which founded the Colony in the face of official hostility, the settlers depend. This spirit of manly self-reliance daily gains force, as we proceed; and I am mistaken if the British people, which has

watched our progress with so much interest, will not discern in it the chief reason for anticipating continued success.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

(Signed) W. WAKEFIELD.

To the Secretary of the New Zealand Company.

CHAPTER III.

DIFFICULTIES OVERCOME BY THE COLONISTS.

It must not be supposed that the Colony has been so successfully established without difficulties. We have indeed had our fair share of them; but they for the most part arose from the absence of the protection of Government, which was for a long time entirely withheld from us in a most unaccountable manner. Some description of the way in which we succeeded in maintaining good order at Port Nicholson, even before we were visited by any officer of the Government, may be interesting to the reader.

As I have already stated, we left England without knowing precisely where the first Colony would be placed; and when the settlers were landed on the shores of Port Nicholson, they found themselves left entirely to their own resources to maintain order and mutual protection.

As it was known that Captain Hobson was at the Bay of Islands, we were in daily expectation of being visited either by the Governor in person or by an officer of the Government. In fact we fully expected that Port Nicholson would be chosen

for the seat of Government as being the most central position for that purpose.

We accordingly waited upwards of a month without taking any step even for our mutual protection, and then we did no more than we were absolutely obliged to do.

I should mention that a Committee of the Colonists had been chosen in England to watch over the interests of the settlers, and generally to do all that was necessary for the complete organization of the body of Colonists previous to their departure.

Early in March 1840, this Committee was called together at Port Nicholson, as a special council. Previous to that some little irregularities had occurred, and for the purpose of protecting society against such acts of individual aggression, a magistrate and several constables were appointed. The conduct of the Colonists had been extremely orderly throughout; but among twelve hundred people living entirely without a Government, and especially with the crews of several ships at all times in the harbour, it was beginning to be apparent to every one that an absolute necessity had arisen for the imposition of some restraints upon the actions of individuals. The Colonists felt the want of protection, and it was evident to every person in the Colony that unless some plan of the kind was immediately adopted, a state of very great disorder and insecurity would arise.

It should be observed, that at the time this step was taken, the only part of New Zealand which had been declared to be under the Crown of England was the small peninsula lying north of the river Thames. The Port Nicholson district,—indeed the whole of New Zealand except the small portion above named—was still under the dominion of the native chiefs, and had been treated as a country, "not within her Majesty's dominions"—that is, as a foreign country.

Under these circumstances, and in order to give perfect legality to their proceedings, the council obtained from the Native Chiefs full and complete authority to establish and exercise British law at Port Nicholson.

The beneficial effects of this became immediately apparent. People felt, at once, that security for their persons and property was established, as offences which it was before necessary to overlook, were immediately detected and punished.

One good effect of establishing the authority of the magistrate and the supremacy of the law, was the protection thereby afforded to the natives against petty aggressors. I have already mentioned the good conduct of the settlers generally towards the natives, and the good feeling of the latter towards the former in return; but occasional cases of ill conduct did occur, and as soon as the magistrate commenced his sittings, these cases were brought under his cognizance.

I was an eye witness of one of these. A sailor belonging to one of the ships, had struck a daughter of Epounee, a principal Chief of Port Nicholson. Immediately about twenty of the natives started up, stripped off their mats, and rushed upon the man and his two companions with the evident intention of taking immediate vengeance. The constables, who were fortunately at hand, rescued the offender, probably from immediate death, and persuaded the natives to allow him to be punished by the authorities. There were a great many settlers, as well as natives present, who would probably have interposed had the man or his companion been sacrificed; so that what might have been a frightful disturbance, attended with considerable bloodshed and loss of life, was converted, by the timely interposition of the constables, into a peaceful appeal to the law. In many other cases the natives have been taught by the protection which was extended to them, to repose confidence in the efficacy of the laws. The case I have mentioned was the only one that came under my own observation, but many others occurred during my temporary absence from the colony.

The only case which excited any considerable interest on account of the resistance to which it led, was that of the master of the ship *Integrity*. This vessel had been chartered by a gentleman of Van Diemen's Land, who has since settled at Welling-

ton; and some dispute having arisen between him and the master, the latter was alleged to have assaulted him and to have refused to allow him to remain on board the ship. He accordingly lodged a complaint against the master, for whose apprehension a warrant was issued.

I have already explained that the bulk of the colonists had squatted at the mouth of the Hutt, but the settlers by the *Adelaide* had established themselves on the beach at Thorndon, the present site of Wellington. It was there that the warrant was served upon Captain Pearson; but he resisted its execution, and having his boat on shore, he sent notice to his people to come to his assistance. Two armed boats accordingly put off from the ship, upon which the settlers who were encamped at Thorndon, turned out with the determination of supporting the constables in the discharge of their duty, and of preventing a rescue. Upon the manifestation of this determination, all show of resistance was discontinued, the *Integrity's* boats returned to their ship, and Captain Pearson was conveyed before the magistrate, and on his refusal to acknowledge the competency of the court, was committed for trial.

In order to provide, as much as possible, for his comfort, and at the same time for his safe keeping, he was taken, under the charge of a constable, on board a ship in the harbour; but through the culpable negligence of the constable, he managed to

effect his escape to his own ship, and as she sailed shortly afterwards for the Bay of Islands, no opportunity for his recapture occurred without risking a collision between the constables and the people of the ship, which it was desirable to avoid.

When Captain Pearson reached the Bay of Islands, his representations, however they may have been intended to operate, had the good effect of hastening the establishment of the Queen's authority at Port Nicholson. Lieut. Shortland, Governor Hobson's colonial secretary, was immediately despatched thither, accompanied by a detachment of thirty soldiers, and a small body of the "mounted police," but dismounted; and on his arrival in the month of June, he caused the British flag to be hoisted, and the Governor's proclamation to be read, declaring the Queen's authority over the whole of New Zealand, to the great joy of the colonists, who testified their satisfaction by receiving Lieutenant Shortland with every mark of attention in their power, and by paying due honour to the British flag.

Thus ended the provisional government, which we had established for our own protection at a time when protection was withheld from us by the Government. No other object had ever been intended, and the provisional government was kept up in a very proper spirit, and in a most effective manner. So long as it lasted, it served the purpose for which it was designed, and maintained

good order throughout the settlement in a manner entirely satisfactory to the people.

The satisfaction which the colonists felt at the arrival of the Government authorities was changed to disappointment when it was found how little was likely to be done to promote the security of property. We had ourselves provided most effectually for the correction of such offences as the magistrate may take cognizance of; and we fully expected that the arrival of Lieutenant Shortland would be followed by the establishment of higher courts of criminal and civil jurisdiction; in short, we could not doubt that government in all its branches — that everything which was necessary to give security to person and property would be established among us. No change, however, took place, except in the persons of the magistrates, and the source of their authority. All that they did—all that they had authority to do—was to hold sittings similar to those of the justices of the peace in this country, taking cognizance only of such offences as one or two justices may lawfully adjudicate upon. Even this amount of protection was of short duration; for, from the time when Lieutenant Shortland quitted Port Nicholson in September, until the month of December, 1840, Port Nicholson had only one justice of the peace; so that all offences which by act of Parliament require "two justices" to adjudicate upon, were either left unpunished, or were punished illegally at

the peril of the single justice. It followed from this, that practically the protection of person and property would have been weaker in Port Nicholson after the visit of Mr. Shortland than before, had it not been that the Queen's authority produced a considerable moral effect, which in some measure compensated for the inadequacy of what was established.

The want of some tribunal for the recovery of debts, and especially of small debts, has been grievously felt by the settlers; and had the provisional government continued a few weeks longer, there is no doubt that it would have devised some method of supplying the want. Many of the retailers literally lived upon the importing merchants, of whom they bought on credit; and under the security that their creditors had no means of recovering the debts due to them, they made use of all the ready money they could muster, in making purchases out of the Sydney ships which arrived at Port Nicholson, the supercargoes of which only sold for cash.

On the establishment of regular government, we had a fair right to expect that something more would be done for the security of property than we were able to do for ourselves. We expected that a court of requests would be established for the recovery of small debts. We expected that the institution of civil courts would immediately follow. Yet, up to the time I left Wellington,

not a single step had been taken in these essential matters, and it seemed as if the Government which ought to have protected us was desirous of driving the settlement into a state of disorganization and anarchy. Yet it has sustained itself against all these disadvantages, though of course under numerous inconveniences, from which the colonists ought to have been protected.

Since my return to England I have seen a notice, dated Sydney, 4th January, establishing Courts of Requests at the Bay of Islands and Port Nicholson, to be held in January, April, July, and October. This may give some small relief, but the infrequency of the holding of these courts almost robs them of all utility. Courts for the recovery of small debts should be held weekly; and even if this had been done, no provision had then been made for the recovery of larger debts than the Court of Requests has jurisdiction over, or for the redress of civil injuries generally.

As a further illustration of my statement, that the protection of property had not, at the time I left, advanced one step beyond that which existed previous to the arrival of Lieutenant Shortland, I may mention that although the straying of cattle and the damage they caused was sufficient almost to prevent, and certainly to check the cultivation of gardens in Wellington, the efforts of the settlers were unable to procure a pound; and even had they succeeded, the Sydney act is so defec-

tive, that the impounded beasts must have been advertised at Auckland certainly, and possibly at Sydney. This is really a serious evil, inasmuch as it interferes with the application of capital to land, and contributes, with the other evils I have mentioned, to the further insecurity of property. In short, the means of securing property which a Government has at its command, are confined to Auckland, where there is no property to secure.

Even the administration of the effects of deceased persons was left in abeyance, for want of some competent authority to grant such administration. If the colonists had been left a little longer to manage their own affairs in their own way, no doubt they would have found some means of dealing with the effects of persons dying intestate; but in this, as in other cases, the effect of the visit of Lieut. Shortland was to prevent us from doing anything, whilst the Government did scarcely anything for us; and in one case, I know the property of a person, who was unfortunately drowned, was locked up out of the control of his creditors in Port Nicholson, and of his next of kin in England, and so it remained, perhaps to perish, at the time I left the colony.

As a Judge has been appointed for, and sent to New Zealand, I trust his practical jurisdiction will not be confined to the least populous part of the Islands, as all the advantages of government have hitherto been.

The want of a competent criminal tribunal has been severely felt, both by individuals and by society at large. I have already stated that the punishment of offences was confined to such as two justices, in the first instance, and afterwards to such as one can legally take cognizance of. Up to the time I left Port Nicholson, nothing in the shape of Courts of Quarter Sessions capable of trying felonies, or even misdemeanors, had been instituted. Drunkenness could be restrained, assaults punished, and some few other delinquencies could be summarily treated, but wherever a trial was necessary, the power of the justices ceased; it was confined to mere committal. Now, in practice, the effect of this was either oppressive to the accused, or led to the ultimate impunity of the offender. A committal for trial, unless the delinquent could find and be admitted to bail, amounted to imprisonment for an indefinite period; and when an offender was held to bail, he felt pretty secure that no ultimate appearance was at all likely to be required of him.

I recollect one cruel case of an old man fully committed for trial by Lieut. Shortland, but as there was no means of trying him, he continued in prison, I believe, up to the time I left. The gaol, be it observed, is only a native-built house, so that the only means of safe keeping is to chain the culprit's legs, and sometimes to handcuff him. In the case in question, the poor old man was in

feeble health, which rendered his punishment doubly severe, and perhaps many times more severe than would have been inflicted had he been found guilty by a properly constituted tribunal. When it is considered that he may after all have been innocent of the offence laid to his charge, the oppressiveness of a power to commit without a tribunal to try offences will be sufficiently apparent, and ought not to have been permitted to last a single month after Lieut. Shortland made his appearance at Port Nicholson.

When offenders were admitted to bail, the effect was impunity to the accused and injury to society, by turning an unpunished delinquent loose on the community. One notorious case was that of a carpenter, charged with thieving the property of the New Zealand Company. He was admitted to bail by the magistrate, and was at large for six months, at the end of which time he ran away, being considerably in debt. The admission to bail was a mere form, for he was never required to appear. Thus admission to bail is as injurious to the public as committal for trial is oppressive to the accused. The institution of Courts of Quarter Sessions, which need not have been delayed at all, would have prevented both classes of evil.

In the month of May, 1840, private business called me to New South Wales, and I did not return to Wellington until the beginning of September. During that interval the discussions on the

bill respecting the titles to land in New Zealand took place in the New South Wales Council, and before the precise nature of the measure was known, various reports reached New Zealand disadvantageous to the interests of the settlers. Great alarm consequently existed respecting the titles to land held under the Company, and this, added to the extreme uncertainty which prevailed as to the disposition of the Governor towards the settlers of Port Nicholson, and the unsettled state of the Government generally, created a degree of alarm which, when I returned to Wellington, really amounted to a panic. Almost the first man I met asked me abruptly if I would go to Chile. Not comprehending the import of his question, I sought explanation, when I learned that a proposal had been made and seriously entertained for abandoning the settlement, under the conviction, that by removing in a body to Chile, we should by our capital and labour impart that value to any country we might occupy, which we had already begun to confer upon Port Nicholson. The proposal was, however, abandoned for one of a more sober character; namely, the appointment of a deputation to proceed to Sydney to obtain a confirmation of the settlers' titles to their land; and I merely mention the fact to show the state of the public mind at the time, arising out of the circumstances I have described.

From the month of September, this state of

alarm gradually subsided, partly in consequence of the renewal of immigration by the arrival of ships from England, and partly by means of the accounts which reached the Colony, that there was some prospect of a favourable arrangement with Government; and when the deputation at length returned from Sydney, in December last, after a successful negotiation with Sir George Gipps, but little real alarm remained, though the settlers still suffered all the inconveniences that I have pointed out as arising from the absence of any efficient administration of the laws.

Now that it is all over, I feel surprised at the patience and steadiness of the settlers during the time when no proper authority was established among them, and they lived in constant fear of being deprived of the land of which they had got possession. It would have been said before-hand, that the settlement could not have preserved its existence under such circumstances. Yet the fact is, that it continually advanced in prosperity. By a sort of common consent, it seemed to be understood, that in our neglected position, everything depended on ourselves. The great bulk of us acted on this understanding, and thus the few evil-doers were kept in check by example and moral influence. A stranger coming among us would have supposed that we were under all the ordinary restraints of a long established society, and it was often said among us, that England could

not furnish the example of a community better governed by the law, than we were by our own right dispositions.

It may perhaps be concluded, speaking of the whole body of settlers, that the absence of protection and law, by making us reflect on the consequences towards others of all our actions, led to a higher degree of good conduct than would have taken place if we had had a Governor, courts of justice, and soldiers to keep us in order. This influence, however, could not have lasted much longer, and it is therefore satisfactory to be assured that lawful and complete government has by this time been fully established in the Company's Settlements.

CHAPTER IV.

SOIL, CLIMATE, AND PRODUCTIONS.

THE first impressions I received of New Zealand were very favourable. We were four days in Cook's Straits, with a great deal of calm weather, and were an equal period at D'Urville's Island. The luxuriance of the vegetation and foliage on every side, as far as the eye could reach, was very conspicuous. The hills of which D'Urville's Island is composed are covered with trees from the water's edge to the very summits. On landing and rambling among the hills, this richness is even more striking, chiefly by reason of the variety of the plants which meet the eye. Coming, as we did, from a long voyage, it would be difficult to describe how agreeable the scene was to our senses, improved as it was by the fineness of the weather. The day on which we entered Port Hardy was perfectly cloudless. The time of year corresponded with July in Europe, and the clearness and brightness of the atmosphere were such as I thought I had never seen surpassed. The scenery may have appeared more beautiful

on account of its being the first we had beheld after the voyage; but it was such as to convince us that the country we had chosen as a new field for colonization could not be poorly endowed, and it was quite apparent that the impression generally produced upon the passengers was of the most favourable kind. There was some surprise at the hilly nature of the country; but the general disposition to make the best of everything, which from first to last has been so conspicuous among all classes of the settlers, and which is, I believe, an important cause of the success of the Port Nicholson Settlement, prevented any expressions of complaint.

The favourable impression of the richness of the country thus produced was not weakened on entering Port Nicholson. We had anchored on the previous evening at the heads, as the wind failed us. The next morning was extremely fine, and we received a visit from Colonel Wakefield. Though the wind blew right out of the harbour, we got under weigh in the forenoon, beat up, and came to an anchor in the afternoon under Somes Island. Several of us being naturally anxious to visit the shore, we obtained one of the ship's boats for the purpose; but not knowing the nature of the ground, we neglected to observe that the tide was ebbing, and when we wished to return, the boat was high and dry. By the aid of some natives we got her off, and returned to

the ship, satisfied with our inspection of the shore, limited as it was.

From the situation of the ship, and the character of the hills by which Port Nicholson is surrounded, we could not form a very accurate conception of the nature of the country. The present site of Wellington was too distant to be seen distinctly, while the river and valley of the Hutt were shut in by the hills, so as to be partially hidden from the view.

On the following day we visited the mouth of the Hutt, and the adjacent beach, with a view of determining where we should fix our temporary abodes. Having decided in favour of the banks of the river, the landing of the passengers and their effects commenced on the following day, every passenger cheerfully taking his part in the work.

When we were fairly "squatted," as I have before described, I had ample opportunities of examining the country about Port Nicholson. The favourable impression of the soil, which had been created by the richness of the vegetation, was confirmed during the three months of my residence on the Hutt, previous to my visit to Sydney. With the exception of the hills facing the Strait, and the high land around Evans Bay, the hills around Port Nicholson are covered with the richest verdure to their summits, which are level, so as to be susceptible of cultivation. The

soil of the hills is extremely rich, and it is the flat land at their tops, as well as their sloping faces, which the natives use as their potatoe grounds.

I may here mention that the natives exhibit great skill in their mode of clearing wood. Their clearances reminded me of what I had seen in America; the stumps of the trees which had been cut down at some feet from the ground being left to rot. In burning the brushwood and branches, they first scatter them over the ground equally, so that every part of the soil is equally improved by the ashes. This is much better than burning in heaps according to the American practice, as the latter plan fertilizes unequally.

The consumption of the settlers caused a great scarcity of potatoes among the natives themselves towards the end of the year. They had sold their whole stock, and they must have suffered some privations until their next crop was ripe for gathering in. But in one respect this had a good effect, for so soon as they began to experience a scarcity of potatoes, they extended their clearings, and the quantity they subsequently raised became equal to the supply of their own wants and to our demand. This, together with the great number of pigs possessed by the natives, created a feeling of security among the settlers. With an abundant supply of pork and potatoes, nothing like

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want, or even scarcity, was likely to overtake the settlement.

The hills around the Port have since been surveyed and opened for selection, and they have generally been chosen by persons having early orders of choice—a proof that they are held in high estimation by those who have had the opportunity of examining them.

Disappointment was at first felt in consequence of an impression that there was a great scarcity of land in the valleys; but this opinion, which prevailed generally at one time, and was widely reported in England, has been corrected by experience.

At first it was thought that the valley of the Hutt was the only one in the neighbourhood of Port Nicholson, and this was believed to be more limited than it has since been found to be; but as the surveyors, the settlers, and some exploring parties extended their examination of the country, rich and fertile valleys, though narrow, have been discovered in every direction; and there is now a general impression that the available land in the Port Nicholson District, will be found sufficient to support a dense population.

The known portion of the valley of the Hutt is now considerable, and from the character of the hills, there can be no doubt that numerous smaller valleys open into, or communicate with it; indeed, little doubt is entertained that there is a commu-

nication between the Hutt and a considerable tract of rich table land connected with Hawke's Bay and M'Donnell's Cove.

The great fertility of the valley of the Hutt has been often mentioned, and I can bear witness that too much cannot well be said in its favour. As soon as the woods are cut down, grasses spring up, affording excellent food for cattle, and all the seeds that have been sown there have produced luxuriantly.

It may not be out of place here to make a suggestion as to the necessity for a regular exploring staff to precede the surveyors. Most of the discoveries of fertile valleys have resulted from accident. No systematic examination of the country has taken place. The surveyors consequently have had but an imperfect conception of what they were going about. They have worked as it were in the dark, and they have, therefore, lost much time upon land which, had it been previously explored, they would not have attempted to lay out for appropriation at present. If, for instance, the mouth of the Hutt had been carefully examined by a competent exploring staff before the surveying party were placed upon it, it would not certainly have been chosen for the site of the first and principal Town. Thus, six valuable weeks of unprofitable labour would have been saved, and Wellington would have been ready for selection and occupation at a much earlier period.

There is, and will long be, ample employment for a body of explorers, such as I venture to recommend. Although we have an ample supply of rich and fertile land, in proportion to our present wants,—enough, indeed, to support a very considerable population, yet, an inspection of the map will show how small a proportion the known parts bear to the unknown parts of the district. In fact, we know but little of the interior country, and yet, it must be evident, that from the extensive stream of emigration which is likely to pour upon New Zealand, the officers of the Company ought to be prepared to point out in what direction the most eligible districts lie. This, I repeat, is not the proper business of the surveyors. They have their own duties to perform, and if my view is correct, a previous exploring of the country is a necessary preliminary to all surveying operations. If the valley of the Hutt alone were fully explored, I feel confident, it would be found to communicate with other valleys of equal fertility.

The natives allege that it does so, and it has hitherto been found that their accounts are correct. In other directions also the character of the hills leads to a similar supposition, which it would be well to have the means of verifying as early as possible. It must indeed be quite evident that the operations of surveying are distinct from those of exploring; and what I desire to see is that

that they be performed by distinct sets of persons, the one being the pioneers as it were of the other.

The Porirua district and river, the mouth of the latter being about ten miles from Port Nicholson, but parts of the district being less than half that distance, have also been partly opened for selection. The land in this valley is of the richest character. The mouth of the river Porirua forms an excellent harbour for small craft. It is a bar harbour with thirteen feet water, without any surf, and with anchorage outside under Kapiti or Entry Island. In the opinion of nautical men the bar may be deepened so as to admit vessels of larger draft of water. The *Brougham* was at anchor for several weeks under Kapiti, where she took in a cargo of whale-oil. This district is rather less heavily timbered than the Hutt, and the cattle find abundance of food there.

What the cattle and sheep do feed upon I am unable to say: they browse to a great extent on the young shoots of various trees and shrubs, and they find great abundance of agreeable and nourishing food, even before any grasses spring up. The rapidity with which they fatten is very remarkable. On my return from Sydney, I was struck with their condition, although the period of my return was just the end of winter. I recollect seeing an account somewhere, that the cattle which had been landed at Port Nicholson

were starving for want of herbage. There is not a word of truth in the statement. The cattle landed lean from on board ship, became fat in a short time, without the least care on the part of the owners, as they are invariably turned loose to shift for themselves. Even the horses of the settlement are left to get their own living; they too manage somehow or other to feed themselves into high condition; in short, it was a standing joke at Port Nicholson, that the only raw-boned animal in the place was carefully fed upon hay and oats, and regularly groomed; whilst the other horses which were left to watch over their own interests, like true self-relying Colonists, were, as I said before, invariably fat.

It should be observed, moreover, that the oxen which worked all day and were only turned loose at night, were in equally good condition. The weight of some oxen has reached 900 lbs. and I know of no cases in which oxen have been fed artificially.

I have not the least doubt that the feeding of stock will become a profitable occupation in New Zealand. Preparations are already making for some establishments of this kind. One gentleman from Sydney is about to commence an establishment on Watt's Peninsula at the entrance of Port Nicholson. There are but few large trees on the spot, and they are confined to the shores of Burnham Water; but there is abundance of vege-

tation, and as the soil is favourable to the purpose, I believe it is the intention of the enterprising proprietor to burn off the natural vegetation, and introduce artificial grasses—a course which I have no doubt will prove successful.

A great number of sheep have also been imported from New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, and they have thriven well. I learn that some New Zealand wool has already been sold in London, at prices about equal to those of Australian wool, and I have no doubt that considerable exports of wool will take place. Several persons in Port Nicholson are about to turn their attention to the keeping of flocks, and I cannot see any reason why it should not be a considerable source of prosperity, unless indeed more profitable occupations should take up the exclusive attention of the Colonists.

The business of establishing the settlement, the choosing of the Town Sections, and getting the population housed, have hitherto very much confined the agricultural operations of the Colonists. Enough had been done, however, in the way of experiment to prove that agriculture will rank high among the resources of the Port Nicholson district. The wheat grown upon the banks of the Hutt from seed obtained from the Cape of Good Hope yielded well, and was of excellent quality; and barley grown from some seed which I brought from New South Wales, where it had

been raised from Cape seed, also turned out remarkably well. Oats yield abundantly, and Indian corn or maize is universally cultivated by the natives. Potatoes are produced in great abundance, as the climate admits of two crops in the course of a year. The native potatoes are very good, but those which have been raised by the settlers are as fine as those of any part of the world.

The native mode of cultivation is very rude, and yet in spite of such rudeness, their crops are large. They have no idea of sowing only the *eye* of the potatoe; but when they dig their potatoes, they simply leave some in for the next crop. In many cases the crop is left on the ground, the natives merely opening the earth about the roots, taking up enough to supply their immediate wants, and covering the root again with earth. But as the New Zealanders imitate closely, and improve rapidly, they will soon adopt more economical modes of cultivation.

Potatoes have already been exported to New South Wales, and will become a very considerable article of exportation. The demand in the Australian Colonies is at all times large, and there is no other convenient source of supply, with the exception of Van Diemen's Land. The same may be said of wheat. The average price of wheat in New South Wales is extremely high, sufficiently so to give a profit to the New Zealand

grower; but if, as I believe, the cultivation of flax should be still more profitable, it will not be worth while to raise wheat for exportation.

All the vegetables of this country have succeeded remarkably well at Port Nicholson. When we arrived, we found turnips, cabbages, and other garden stuff in great perfection. They had been raised from seed taken out by the *Tory*. They were grown between the present site of Wellington and the Hutt; and as some of them were left to seed, every one who chose to do so, helped himself in passing, by which means excellent sorts of every species have been spread over the Colony. There were, when I left Wellington, several well stocked gardens within the precincts of the town; and now that the Colonists are fully in possession of their town lands, a considerable portion of the future town will no doubt be converted into garden grounds. I may mention in this place, that Colonel Wakefield has growing in his garden a considerable number of English oaks, raised from acorns, and they bid fair to succeed well.

When I quitted the Colony, several vines had been planted, but had not then produced grapes. I myself took about one hundred cuttings of different sorts from Sydney, many of which were flourishing, but were of course too young to yield fruit. From the nature of the climate of Port Nicholson, there can be no doubt of the ultimate

success of the vine; but whether it will be worth while to make wine for exportation, must depend upon the success of flax growing, the profits of which will, I have every reason to believe, give it a preference over all other modes of employing capital and labour. It is, however, satisfactory to know that the climate is well adapted to the vine, as well as to all the productions of the more southern parts of Europe. The olive has been planted at Port Nicholson, and is in the same state as the vines; that is, it has succeeded sufficiently to give promise of productiveness, though time enough has not yet elapsed to enable us to judge of the fruit. The mulberry has advanced a stage further. I took from Sydney some bearing mulberry trees, which at once yielded fine fruit. In this respect, they proved more hardy than my apple trees, the blossoms of which got injured on board the ship. I had also a stock of peach and plum trees, which I have no doubt will succeed. I had also some filberts, which are already in a flourishing state. The walnut I could not introduce, as it does not grow in New South Wales. It succeeds well in Chile, as does also the old Spanish chesnut, and I think it would be worth the settlers' while to try both.

One drawback upon the cultivation of the vine, the olive, and the mulberry, is, that the English really know nothing about it. To cultivate them to any extent, we shall require French and Ger-

man cultivators, to whom the most liberal encouragement should be given. The few French at Akaroa, on Banks's peninsula, have begun to make a business of cultivating the vine, and, I am told, with every prospect of success.

The production which I think is likely to yield a larger profit than any other, and is therefore better calculated to engage the attention of the colonists, is the *Phormium tenax*, or New Zealand flax.

This plant grows in great abundance in every part of New Zealand. No soil seems to be unsuited to it; but as there are several varieties of this indigenous plant, it yet remains to be ascertained which is the best species, and on what soils it may be most beneficially grown. Formerly the *Phormium tenax* was extensively cultivated by the natives; but at this time all that is gathered grows spontaneously. The best kinds flourish at Port Nicholson, at that part of the Taranake district which has been chosen for the New Plymouth settlement, and, it is said, around Hawke's Bay. Taranake formerly yielded the largest quantity for exportation; but the natives abandoned that part of the country some years since for Port Nicholson, where they occupied the place of the original inhabitants, who emigrated to the Chatham Islands. This I learned from Mr. Richard Barrett, who has resided many years in New Zealand, and who then lived with the natives

of Taranake. He has since lived at Port Nicholson, and has only lately returned to his former place of abode.

The early trials of the New Zealand flax will most likely be made from the wild plant, but as soon as it becomes an article of exportation it will be cultivated. My reason for so thinking is, that the number and great difference of the sorts must cause a considerable mixture of inferior with the superior qualities. Hence it will be necessary to discourage the one, and encourage the other. At present it would require much ground to be travelled over to collect the finest sorts only; by cultivation they would be always at hand, as none other would be worth the labour and expense.

It was some time before the colonists paid any attention to this subject, or indeed to any species of production. This was not because we undervalued its importance, but we were for some time busy with a succession of occupations connected with getting ourselves settled upon the land, temporarily as squatters, and afterwards upon our town acres. We really had no time to think of the future; the immediate business of settlement necessarily occupied us. After the town acres had been chosen, our thoughts began to take a more extended range. The utility of having some exportable staple came to be appreciated, and at length New Zealand flax fixed all our attention.

The first public exhibition of the interest which

was growing up on the subject appeared in the shape of an advertisement, addressed "to the ingenious," in the Port Nicholson newspaper, the *New Zealand Gazette,* of the 12th of December. It was as follows:—

"A suitable reward will be paid to any person who may invent a machine to aid manual labour in preparing New Zealand flax or hemp, provided it complies with the following conditions:—

1st. The machine, if to be used by one person, must not cost more than £5, and in any case must be durable.

2. It must be so easily applied, that one week's instruction shall enable the most ignorant to work it.

3. It must enable one person to render fit for shipment not less than 50 lbs. weight of flax daily.

4. It must be easily made and removed.

"Gazette Office, Taranake-place,
"December 10, 1840."

I know not by whom this advertisement was inserted in the Gazette, nor am I aware of any of the circumstances connected with it. I republish it here, merely for the purpose of showing that the attention of individuals was directed towards the subject.

On the 24th of December, an advertisement, signed by several persons of known enterprise, was published in the *New Zealand Gazette,* calling

a public meeting for January 4th, to form an association to discover the best method of preparing New Zealand flax for exportation, and "all interested in the future prospects of the colony" were requested to attend.

In anticipation of this meeting a statement was drawn up by a gentleman who had made the subject his study for some time, and I believe had been engaged in the growth of flax in Ireland. I have no means of verifying his calculations, as I myself have neither made nor witnessed the making of any experiments, but I believe them to have been conducted with care; and as far as anything can be relied on in the present imperfect state of our information, I think the statement which follows is entitled to confidence.

"The native hemp, or *phormium tenax*, is the article of local produce which of all others can, with least delay, and least capital, be rendered fit for export in large quantities. It can be procured in a state fit for making cordage within six months from the present time, if an adequate capital be immediately raised, and proper machinery be erected and set to work.

"It can be prepared in any required quantity at a price which would command an extensive and ready sale, and, at the same time, leave a large profit to those engaged in the trade of preparing it. As a rough estimate of the nature of this important article, I beg to submit the following calculations for consideration.

"Let it be supposed that in a flax farm of 100 acres in extent, each plant should occupy a space of two square yards, or a square of nearly fifty-one inches in the side, the total number of such plants to an acre would be 2,420; take as an average each plant to yield 12 lbs. of the fresh-cut green leaves per year, this would give rather more than 2,900,000 lbs., or about 1,296 tons, annually, of fresh-cut leaves off a farm of 100 acres extent.

"I have prepared a small quantity of the fresh-cut leaves, by way of experiment, and the result enables me to state, that about one-fifth of the gross weight of green leaves, prepared according to my plan, can be had of hemp, in a fit state for making good ropes or cordage: besides which, a quantity of coarse tow, equal to about half the weight of the fresh-cut leaves, is obtained in the operation of cleansing the hemp of short fibres and pulp. There would, therefore, be procurable from such a farm, about 250 tons of hemp in a proper state for the ropemaker's use, and about 600 tons of a coarse tow, fit for making ropes of inferior quality, and coarse packing canvass.

"This coarse tow would, if sold so low as 3*l.* per ton, almost pay the whole first cost of the prepared hemp, including rent, expense of cultivating and procuring the raw leaves, and the wages of the operatives engaged in the preparation of it. The hemp, if sold even so low as 15*l.* per ton, would be nearly all profit, as the cost of

procuring it would be almost, or altogether, covered by the value of the tow. A capital of no more than 5,000*l.* would be sufficient to set on foot an establishment capable of turning out from 600 to 700 tons annually, and, in any case, would pay full 80 per cent. profit on the value of the hemp sold.

"I am of opinion that an establishment of the kind, having extensive rope-walks in connexion with it, would be one of the best paying investments of capital which can possibly be made in this place. I shall send a sample of the prepared hemp, for your further satisfaction."

This is certainly a brilliant promise; but although I will not venture to anticipate what profit the future cultivator of New Zealand flax is likely to realize, I have a very strong conviction that it will be our staple article of export; and that, like the wool of New South Wales, its profitableness will be such as to make it not worth while, for many years to come, to invest capital in any other exportable commodity. I ground my opinion chiefly on the large European demand, and on the great variety of purposes to which our flax may be applied. It combines the qualities of hemp and flax, some samples having the strength of the former, and others having the fineness of the latter. Cordage and coarse sail-cloth are made from the strongest kinds, whilst some samples I have seen have been of a silky texture,

and I believe that in France cambric has been made from it, of great delicacy and beauty. It has also been manufactured into paper of excellent quality, both in this country and in France.

The public meeting took place on the 4th January, as advertised, and the following is the account of the proceedings which appeared in the *New Zealand Gazette*:—

"In conformity with the notice inserted in last week's paper, a meeting took place on Monday last at Barrett's Hotel, to consider the best steps to be taken to secure, at the earliest moment, some efficient mode of preparing New Zealand flax in larger quantities for shipment to Europe. The meeting was most respectably and numerously attended, and Colonel Wakefield was voted into the chair. Several gentlemen addressed the meeting on the extreme importance of the subject under consideration, and suggested various means of attaining the purpose for which they were convened. The meeting concluded by appointing a Committee to prepare a suitable address or proposals on the subject. The Committee met on Wednesday, and prepared the address which appears in this day's paper, and to which we invite general attention.

"It will be seen that a good subscription list is added to the address, and we hope our fellow Colonists will make the amount up to five hundred pounds. The absent proprietors, who will

reap so large an advantage, unattended with the necessary discomforts of early colonization, we are confident will be prepared to add an equal amount to that subscribed here, and we may safely rely with confidence on the well known liberality of the New Zealand Company. We may, we think, assume that the subscription will amount to two thousand pounds, an amount, there is little doubt, which will set many an active and ingenious brain to work for the prosperity of New Zealand; the work of discovery once in the hands of such men, we feel confident a few months will find us in possession of the machine or process, which will enable us to freight a hundred vessels with a new production, which will still further augment the exporting power of our mother country.

"It would be impossible to place too much importance upon obtaining the means of preparing flax suitably, and in abundance for export. The plant is in boundless profusion, and the demand in Europe and America will far surpass any means of production of which we may become possessed. Instead of labouring under the fear which too commonly haunts producers, the fear of over supplying their markets, we have rather to fear the contrary, and especially at the most important period of production—its early stages. Manufacturers say, send us plenty, send us ten thousand tons to commence with—less is not worthy our

attention. That is, send us some thirty ship loads as a sample. What an inexhaustible field such a demand suggests? And how trifling the amount of subscription necessary, we suspect, to enable us to open such a field of prosperity to these islands. Indeed, should any ingenious individual provide us in a suitable manner, as he will be the cause of the fortunes of thousands, a fortune ought to be secured to him for conferring so great a blessing on his fellow-creatures, by securing a patent on certain terms, or agreeing to some trifling export tax on every ton of hemp shipped."

The following is the address alluded to above:

"Proposals for raising a subscription to reward the ingenuity of any person who shall invent a tool or machine, or discover a process, by which the *phormium tenax*, the indigenous produce of the islands of New Zealand, may be rendered available as an export for commercial purposes, at a price and in a quantity to meet the demand in the European market.—A meeting was held at Barrett's Hotel, on Monday, the 4th January, 1841, Colonel Wakefield in the chair, in pursuance of an advertisement issued by several gentlemen deeply impressed with the indispensable necessity of finding some staple commodity as an export for the islands of New Zealand. At that meeting much valuable information was communicated, and samples of New Zealand flax in dif-

ferent stages of preparation were exhibited, and a provisional committee was appointed, consisting of the following members, intrusted to raise the necessary subscriptions to carry into effect the object proposed, and having done so, to report to a general meeting of subscribers.

MEMBERS OF THE PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE.

Dr. Evans,	D. Scott, Esq.
Captain Daniell,	G. Hunter, Esq.
J. C. Crawford, Esq.	H. Moreing, Esq.
J. Watt, Esq.	R. D. Hanson, Esq.
W. B. Rhodes, Esq.	

W. V. BREWER, Esq. Secretary.
GEORGE HUNTER, Esq. Treasurer.

"The Committee having met, submit to the public a brief explanation of the object proposed, and earnestly solicit the contributions of all classes to a project so deeply affecting the prosperity of this community. Satisfied as this committee are, in common with all impartial observers, as to the salubrity of the climate and the vast agricultural as well as mineral resources of these islands, to say nothing of the fisheries and other branches of industry that are beginning to develop themselves, it must be admitted that hitherto the expectations entertained of the *phormium tenax*, as a staple calculated to rival the cotton of America and the wool of Australia, have not been realized. The failure has arisen, not from any disappointment in the quantity of the flax, which is found growing spontaneously in every part of these islands,

on every description of soil, nor from any falling off in the growing demand for the raw material, but solely from the impossibility of any longer obtaining the native labour necessary to render it marketable by the first process of stripping and cleaning.

"The Committee beg to repeat emphatically that the only impediment to the export of an article which grows wild upon the highest hills and in the deepest swamps, which in its nature is a perennial, requiring little more attention than the periodical cutting down; which may be considered as producing, after all deductions and losses, an average of 2½ tons per acre of available fibre, valued at 15*l.* per ton when prepared for shipment—is the want of some tool, machine, or process, for the economical performance of a very simple task, which has hitherto been successfully accomplished by the New Zealand women by the aid of a mussel-shell.

"The Committee cannot believe that anything more is requisite to supply this want than to invite the attention of ingenious persons in Europe, and in these Colonies, to the subject. They propose, therefore, to offer a reward for such an invention or discovery, feeling confident that the Directors of the New Zealand Company and other friends in England will co-operate with them in augmenting the subscription, and that the Company will undertake the special duty of making

known the subject as widely as possible in Europe, and of promoting and rewarding the experiments of scientific men.

"The Committee need not insist upon the obvious fact that the land-owner, the merchant, the mechanic, and all other descriptions of persons in the settlement, are interested in providing that which, if obtained, will rank New Zealand among those wealthy Colonies which supply the mother country with the raw material of those manufactures upon which its prosperity, if not existence, now depends.

"Subscriptions are to be paid into the Union Bank, in the name of the treasurer to the Association.

SUBSCRIBERS' NAMES.

	£	s		£	s.
W. Wakefield	5	5	M. Murphy	2	2
G. S. Evans	5	5	W. V. Brewer	2	2
H. Moreing	5	5	David Scott	5	5
D. Sinclair	5	5	H. St. Hill	5	5
F. A. Molesworth	5	5	R. D. Hanson	5	5
A. Hort, Jun.	5	5	J. T. Wicksteed	5	5
W. B. Rhodes & Co.	5	5	W. M. Smith	5	5
Henry Shuttleworth	5	5	T. M. Partridge	5	5
J. C. Crawford	5	5	S. Revans	5	5
Ridgways & Co.	5	5	J. & G. Wade	5	5
E. Daniell	5	5	Hay & Machattie	5	5
Waters & Smith	5	5	J. Dorset	5	5
Willis & Co.	5	5			
H. W. Petre	5	5	Total	£130	4

Soon after the meeting a select committee was appointed to receive specifications of inventions, and to report upon the same. The committee

was bound not to divulge any invention that was made known to them, in order that those who were not fortunate enough to secure the favourable opinion of the committee might not be prejudiced, but might avail themselves of any advantages which their invention should enable them to secure. No report had been made by this committee when I left Port Nicholson; but I understood that several inventions had been submitted to them, which promised to fulfil the desired object—that is, to reduce the flax to such a state as will permit it to be exported without being liable to injury during the voyage. As to the nicer processes necessary to bring it into a state fit for manufacture, it will be probably more advantageous to perform them in this country, where they can be effected much more cheaply.

The great object is to separate the fibre from the refuse portions of the leaf. If this be not done, the fibre, that is, the flax itself, will heat in the packing, and become useless; but if the fibre be freed from the refuse a little more perfectly than the natives are in the habit of doing, there will be no danger of its heating, as that which is even rudely dressed by the natives very seldom heats, and then not to a great extent.

In Sydney the New Zealand flax is held in great esteem. It is invariably made use of where much strength is required, as, for instance, for whale lines.

Before I left Wellington, string was manufactured from flax dressed in a peculiar way—I believe chemically, and not mechanically. This would do for string or twine well enough, but hitherto chemical processes have had the effect of weakening the fibre, and therefore have not been adopted or encouraged. Since my departure I find that cordage, string, and door-mats have been manufactured at Wellington for home consumption.

There is no limit to the extent to which flax may be raised by means of cultivation. It has been shown in the above extracts, that the return for a given outlay will probably be large, and the quantity which a given space will yield is inconceivable to those who have not witnessed it. It is not like a plant which merely yields a fruit or a seed; the whole plant itself is crop, every leaf yielding produce.

One fact has not, to my knowledge, been mentioned. The flower of the plants abounds with honey, which the natives frequently suck. Thus, should bees be introduced into New Zealand,—and I see no reason why they should not,—they will find abundance of food in the flower of the *phormium tenax*, as well as in others. I mention this in case any one should be disposed to take bees as an experiment.

Of the mineral productions of New Zealand very little is as yet known; indeed, many years

must elapse before the resources of the country, in this as well as in other particulars, are even partially unfolded. Coal is an exception to this general statement, for it has been found in several places, and probably exists in most parts of both islands.

I recollect, before I left England, a native who died in this country, distinctly and with great earnestness stated, that coal was to be found on the southern island, and he pointed out the neighbourhood of Port Otago as its precise locality. Soon after the arrival of the *Tory*, coal was brought to Colonel Wakefield by some natives, and samples were sent to the New Zealand Company.

In January last a cargo was imported into Port Nicholson from a place called Wanganui, in Blind Bay, and it was found to burn well. This coal was obtained by the crew of the vessel on the beach by means of crow-bars and pickaxes, requiring no mining operations, and accessible to everybody.

Recent accounts state that coal has been found at Evans Bay, in Port Nicholson. To what extent it may exist there, has not been ascertained; but should it turn out to be both good and abundant, it will confer upon the place a high degree of importance as a steam-boat station.

Among the resources of New Zealand I must not omit to mention whale-fishing. The seas

around New Zealand are the resort of the black whale; and almost the first Europeans who established themselves on the shores of either island were drawn thither by the abundant supply of fish in the neighbouring waters. There is scarcely a harbour in Cook's Straits, and on the eastern coast of the southern island, in which there are not whaling establishments. These are what are called "shore parties," who keep a look-out for whales, and when one makes his appearance they man their boats, and generally succeed in capturing him. The cutting up and boiling proceeds on shore, and when a sufficient quantity is collected a ship is sent—sometimes from station to station—to collect it. The *Brougham*, which was employed by the New Zealand Company, and which lately made so short a passage to England, namely, ninety-two days, was loaded with oil collected in this way, chiefly from Captain Daniell's station at Porirua. This, then, is the first export of oil on account of the Colony of Port Nicholson, and perhaps the first which will appear in the official returns under the head of oil imported from New Zealand; but in point of fact New Zealand whale-oil is not new to this country, though it has appeared under another name; for before the islands became a British Colony, the ships which were sent to collect the oil from Cloudy Bay and other stations, were cleared from the Sydney Custom House, so that the oil

ranked as a Colonial, and escaped the heavy duty of a foreign production.

Henceforth, New Zealand being now a British Colony, the collecting ships will proceed to England direct from the places where the oil is made, and the nominal amount of the exports from New South Wales will be proportionably diminished.

The system of "shore parties" for which New Zealand affords such facilities, is much more economical, where it can be adopted, than the pursuit of the whale by ships equipped for the purpose. A ship requires a considerable daily expenditure for wages, provisions, and wear and tear, and it must be better to confine that expence to the time the ship is absolutely wanted. Where the whales are at a distance from any coast, ships are of course necessary; but where, as on the coasts of New Zealand, whales come within reach of boats from the shore, the great cost of pursuing them with ships is saved. This advantage is well understood by the settlers at Port Nicholson, who bid fair to be the purchasers of the greater part of the oil made at stations already established, and have begun to form new stations.

The supply of fish has hitherto been abundant, but it can hardly be doubted, that in time they will be driven away by the active pursuit of the shore parties. Whenever this shall happen, the Colonists of New Zealand will still possess the

advantage of being able to carry on the fishery in vessels of moderate size, which will be constantly employed in fishing, the oil taken being brought to New Zealand for trans-shipment into emigrant vessels about to return home; a process far less expensive than that of the South Sea fishery carried on in European ships fitted for a three years' voyage.

Now that I am on the subject of fisheries, I may mention that the variety and abundance of fish fit for food are very great. Many, of which I do not know the name, are extremely fine flavoured. There is one called the "habouka," which is sometimes as large as to weigh 100 lbs., and is of excellent flavour. There is a fish like the sole, and the crawfish and oysters exactly resemble those of this country.

There are various birds in the woods, but I know but little of them. Wild ducks and pigeons abound, but are easily scared away, and in the Taranake district, it has recently been ascertained that there are quails; their existence had been asserted by the natives by imitating their cry, and the information was confirmed before I left, by one of the surveyors of the Plymouth settlement, who had shot one there, and brought it to Wellington.

The excellence, variety, and abundance of the timber trees of New Zealand have frequently been mentioned by others, and I can do but little

else than confirm, and perhaps in one or two trifling particulars, correct their statements.

The *kauri* is the wood most prized, because of the large size which it attains, and its fitness for the top-masts of the largest ships. None grow south of 38° south latitude, consequently there is none at Port Nicholson; but this is not to be regretted, as it invariably grows upon a poor soil, and we have abundance of other woods of perhaps more extensive utility than the kauri.

The *kahikatea* has been spoken of by some writers as a very indifferent wood, but I have reason to believe that this is an error. The wood is similar to the American white pine, but of closer grain. It has been much used by the settlers, and has answered well hitherto. It works easily, and is admirably adapted for the joiner's work of houses to which it has been applied. It has been taken by some ships as spars, but I do not know with what success.

The *totara* is a wood of a different character, but of equal utility. It is very hard, of a reddish colour, and works well. I have seen some furniture made of the totara at Wellington. It is capable of receiving a good polish. The furniture I allude to was made from wood that had been for a considerable length of time sunk in the river, having floated down the Hutt from the large totara forest discovered by Dr. Dieffenbach, the Company's naturalist.

The *rata* is also used for almost every purpose, being close-grained and easily worked. I believe it is well adapted for ship and boat building.

The *rewa-rewa* is a very pretty wood, marked with streaky spots of a lightish red colour. It would make a very good furniture wood.

There are many other woods at Port Nicholson, but they have not been brought under my notice; they are however known to be for the most part useful woods, and are sufficiently numerous to give the settlers a wide choice. The kahikatea, from its great abundance and serviceable properties, has been almost the only wood hitherto employed by the Colonists.

When I left Wellington, a steam saw-mill was just on the point of being erected by a company, which will for some time keep the town and neighbourhood well supplied with sawn timber of all kinds. From the demand which arose as soon as the town acres were chosen, sawn timber was very high priced, and sawyers consequently were enabled to earn enormous wages; but when the mill is in operation, I apprehend the price of deals and scantling will be reduced one-half—a matter of considerable importance to a rapidly rising town.

Shingles, a sort of thin short board, about the size of a tile, and used for covering houses, are already made to some extent at Wellington.

Staves have also, I believe, been made of some of the harder woods.

The climate of New Zealand is as salubrious, as it is favourable to production. It has been stated in many of the settlers' letters which have been published from time to time, that although exposed to wet for days together, they never experienced the slightest ill effects. I can confirm this statement to the letter; indeed, the superiority of the climate is a fact upon which all the settlers agree. I have been frequently exposed first in fresh water and then in the sea, and then again in fresh water, and have allowed my clothes to remain on, without the least inconvenience. For the first three months that I was in Port Nicholson, I was incessantly occupied in the water, and yet I never had a cold. Then our tents and houses were not at first very well calculated to keep out the rain. In England the consequence of this would have been serious disease, and yet I heard of no case of illness from exposure.

The temperature throughout the season is singularly equable, as will appear by the following table of the temperature at Port Nicholson, from an account kept by Mr. Revans.

STATE OF THE THERMOMETER AT PORT NICHOLSON, FROM APRIL, 1840, TO APRIL, 1841.

1840.		Mean Temperature. 8 A.M.	5 P.M.
April	24	57·5	59·1
May	1	50·86	59·29
	8	52·20	55·14
	15	56·28	55·14
	22	54.88	61·86
	29	56	58·87
June	6	53	57
	12	48·57	54·57
	19	46	54·14
	26	47·57	54·57
July	3	50·85	54·43
	10	45·57	47·43
	17	48·57	55·43
	24	45·55	56
	31	42·2	56
Aug.	7	40·28	53·28
	14	49·28	54·43
	21	46·71	56·30
	28	49	53
Sept.	4	51·6	52·2
	11	47	54
	19	50·60	50·60
	25	——	——
Oct.	1	53·57	58
	8	57	60·29
	15	58·14	60.28
	22	59·27	60·86
	29	56·28	60·86
Nov.	5	56·28	60·86
	12	57·14	63·43
	19	56·57	60·43
	26	60	61·71
Dec.	3	57·86	62·59
	10	59·14	61·85
	17	65	65·71
	24	66·14	68.14
	31	68·57	69·80
1841.			
Jan.	7	64·57	65·86
	14	68·42	71·28
	21	72·14	73·57
	28	61·43	64·86
Feb.	4	65·85	67·77
	11	69·43	69·57
	18	——	——
	25	59·13	62
March	3	63·28	64·71
	10	63·86	65·14
	18	62·43	61·14
	25	62·71	61·71
April	1	55·57	62·28
	8	59·57	66

At Port Nicholson, the temperature in winter seldom sank below 45°. On one or two mornings before day-break there was a thin film of ice upon shallow-water in pools, but it did not remain. Snow never fell at Wellington, though it can be seen on the high mountains in the neighbourhood. Some of the highest peaks, such as Mount Egmont and some of the mountains on the South Island, are above the line of perpetual snow; but in the plains the snow seldom falls, and never remains.

The summer weather is equally removed from the extreme. The heat is never oppressive; and even were the temperature higher than it is, the constant breezes at Port Nicholson would obviate all inconvenience. Nothing, indeed, can be more delightful to the feelings than the climate. The only fault I ever heard attributed to it, is the prevalence of high winds; but this has been exaggerated, owing, probably, to the number of settlers who, having lived in the inland counties of England, had no previous experience of sea-coast weather.

On the suitableness of the climate to production I have anticipated almost all that need be said while speaking of the vegetation and the condition of all sorts of stock.

It has been commonly supposed in England, that the winter must be severe in the more southern parts of New Zealand. This is not the opinion

of persons who have resided there. As I cannot give any information on the subject from my own experience, I will only refer to the statements of others. According to reports from captains of whaling ships, who had visited Port Otago, and who were questioned on the subject by Colonel Wakefield, the winter there is scarcely less mild than at Port Nicholson; and native inhabitants of the place have concurred in declaring that snow remains only on the hills. The growth of vines at Akaroa, in Banks' Peninsula, which were planted by the French colonists in the depth of winter, almost proves the mildness of the winter climate in that place. And Major Bunbury, in his report to Governor Hobson of a voyage to the southward in Her Majesty's ship *Herald*, dated 28th June, 1840, in speaking of Stewart's Island, the southern extremity of New Zealand, says, "In some excursions I made, I was much pleased with the fertile appearance of this beautiful island; and although the winter was so far advanced, it was not so cold as I had anticipated from its being so far to the south. Indeed, the number of parroquets seen flying about, gave it rather the appearance of a tropical island. The cassowary has also been seen in different parts of the island; and I am told by Captain Stuart, that he has seldom found snow to lie here for any number of days, even in the depth of winter."

CHAPTER V.

PROSPECTS.

The physical character of the islands of New Zealand, points out at once in what way they must be settled. The country has no large rivers intersecting the interior, nor, strictly speaking, any navigable rivers at all, but is, on the other hand, richly provided with harbours. In most of these, Europeans are to be found, chiefly engaged in whaling; and the obvious course of settlement will be to establish towns on each of the available harbours, which have a sufficient extent of fertile land in their neighbourhood, to permit population to spread.

This has been the course hitherto pursued. The Bay of Islands first became the resort of Europeans; Hokianga followed; and the harbours of Cook's Straits, and the east coast of the southern island down to the extreme south, have long been occupied by shore parties, as already described.

The mode pursued by the Company in forming their settlements, seems to acknowledge the same necessity. Port Nicholson, with its town of Wellington, was no soooner established beyond

the reach of disaster, than the Company entered into an arrangement with the Plymouth Company for the planting of another settlement on any convenient spot; and on my return to England I found that further arrangements had been made with a body of gentlemen ready to emigrate, to found another settlement of which the chief town is to be called Nelson, the site to be determined by the officers of an expedition dispatched for the purpose last April.

In this way settlement after settlement will be formed on both Islands. On the southern island there are several very eligible sites for the purpose, though little known. The soil is excellent; there is abundance of coal, and I believe the climate is much milder than that of England. Major Bunbury, in the report* which I have already quoted, speaks as follows of this island:—

"At Akaroa we found a native village, and some Europeans connected with whaling establishments. A Captain Lethart, of Sydney, also here since the 10th of November last, has established a cattle run with about thirty head of horned cattle, and has two stockmen in charge of them. From the appearance of this herd, I am inclined to believe the pasturage much better

* This report is published in the 44th Number of the *New Zealand Journal*—a Newspaper published once a fortnight in London, and exclusively devoted to the publication of intelligence respecting New Zealand.

than at the Bay of Islands. Potatoes grown from this to the southward, are unquestionably of a superior quality, and in no respect inferior to those grown in Van Diemen's Land.

"The harbour of Akaroa is an æstuary, forming a basin which extends about eight miles into the peninsula, and is surrounded by very high mountains, precipitous at the entrance, and very narrow; but as you advance, these mountains gradually slope into a succession of hills, clothed with verdure and timber to their summits, and abounding in streams of excellent water. The country has a very picturesque and park-like appearance, and seems well adapted for farms where both arable and pasture lands are required, yielding a mixed produce.

"On leaving Tavai Poenammoo, or the Middle Island (otherwise the South Island), I was forcibly struck with the bleak and savage appearance of its chain of mountains covered with eternal snow, as viewed from the sea, and contrasted with the real amenity of its climate, and fertility of the soil near the coast. I am inclined to believe that the capabilities of this island for purposes of agriculture have been much underrated, to say nothing of its splendid harbours and mineralogical productions; and I am also certain, that the intelligence and enterprising character of the natives, as well as the extent of its population, have been equally misunderstood."

The portion of New Zealand which has become most attractive to Colonists is Cook's Strait. Port Nicholson now numbers more than four thousand souls; people are beginning to settle at Wanganui; the Plymouth settlement, when all the emigrants now on their way shall have arrived will number nearly six hundred and upwards; and one thousand persons have just taken their departure to commence the second settlement of Nelson.

Under these circumstances, the extreme inconvenience of placing the seat of Government on the peninsula at the northern extremity of New Zealand, must be apparent to every one. I do not believe the whole peninsula contains above one-twentieth part of the superficial area of the two islands, and a great part of the northern extremity is known to be barren. If Captain Hobson had been sent to New Zealand to found a small town, there would perhaps be no objection to the spot; but he was sent to govern a Colony, and it does seem almost unaccountable that he should have neglected to visit Port Nicholson, and the harbours in Cook's Strait, and should have fixed the seat of government at so great a distance from the people to be governed, and from that part of New Zealand which is and must continue to be the most attractive to settlers.

The central position of Port Nicholson is very conspicuous. If the northern island had alone

been considered, it might have been deemed expedient to seek some other spot for the seat of Government, but even in that case Auckland would have been ill adapted to the purpose. The fact that the more attractive portion of the northern island is situated on its southern coast, would alone have rendered Auckland an ill chosen site. Still excluding the southern island from calculation, with emigration going on as it now does, it is obvious that it will soon become impossible to govern the settled parts of the island from so great a distance as Auckland. Hitherto, as I have shown, the populous portion of New Zealand has not been governed—for it is absurd to call the proceedings of a single police magistrate by the name of governing. As society becomes more complicated, the mere expensiveness of governing from such a distance will break up the scheme.

It is possible that the officers of the Government have persuaded Captain Hobson, that the mere establishing of the seat of government would at once attract population without any other consideration. It will no doubt draw a few persons who hope for some advantage, and some others who are compelled to reside wherever the seat of government may happen to be; but he will find that something more is necessary; and I am quite sure that if Captain Hobson had visited Port Nicholson, with Cloudy Bay, Blind Bay, Akaroa, and Port Otago, so as to convince himself of

the direction which population and settlement are sure to take, before he decided upon Auckland, he would have acknowledged the necessity of placing the seat of government somewhere midway between the extremities of New Zealand; and as Wellington is the centre of colonization from England, and must in a few years become very populous, his unbiassed judgment would in all probability have fixed upon that place as the proper seat of the public offices and the principal courts of justice.

I have already described the panic at Wellington in consequence of the Sydney Act respecting titles, and the manner in which the alarm subsided as favourable accounts arrived from England. The arrangement made with Sir Geo. Gipps was not altogether as good as we could have wished, but it was looked upon as temporary, the colonists having full confidence that the Company would be enabled to make some arrangements of a more satisfactory nature in this country. That expectation has not been disappointed; yet it is due to Sir George Gipps to say, that his arrangement completed the restoration of public confidence; and if the reader will take the pains to look at the dates of the proceedings respecting the cultivation and preparation of the New Zealand flax, he will find that they commenced just after the return of the deputation from Sydney.

Shortly after I left, the *Bally* arrived, bearing the terms of the final arrangement between the New Zealand Company and the Government. There can be no doubt that this wise settlement of a miserable dispute, will produce the most beneficial effect upon the Colony. So long as the position of the Company towards the government was doubtful, their chief agent scarcely felt himself justified in increasing the outlay of the Company for surveys, roads, and other necessary purposes. This I have no doubt was partly the cause of the slow progress of the Company's surveys; but the "final arrangement" will give activity to every department of the Company's service. Nor will the effect upon the settlers be less beneficial. Every one now feels secure that he will not be deprived of the fruits of his labour or capital, and every branch of production will be stimulated in a high degree.

Of the utility of the Company, no one, as far as I am aware, entertains any doubt. The Colonists feel that their own interests and those of the Company are so intimately connected, that the one cannot be pursued without at the same time promoting the other. The Directors are bound to consult the interests of the shareholders in the first instance, but it is satisfactory to reflect, that the best mode of so doing is to promote ours.

The confidence of the Colonists in the Company was never weakened even at the most trying

period. Somehow or other we always thought that the character of the Directors, and I may be permitted to add, that of the Colonists, and the enterprising nature of their undertaking, would sooner or later have its due effect upon the Government, and incline them favourably towards us. The fulfilment of this expectation will strengthen the confidence of the Colonists in the Company for the future, which confidence will also be extended to the Government.

To complete the favourable prospects of the Colony, nothing is now wanting but the supplying of those defects in the local government of Port Nicholson which I have freely pointed out. The promise of a municipal corporation for each settlement, and the establishment of courts of justice, with a legislative council for general purposes, will complete what is wanting; and I now foresee no check to the prosperity of the Colony, except indeed in the possibility of Governor Hobson's perseverance in a policy with respect to the seat of government, which admits of no justification. Trusting that this policy has been ere now abandoned, I will only add to the statements contained in Colonel Wakefield's letter which I brought to England, that if unhappily the Governor should continue to reside, with all the heads of departments, at nearly the greatest possible distance from the centre of the islands and the seat of the great majority of the British population, and by

means of the public money to draw off emigrants conveyed to Cook's Strait at the expense of purchasers of land in the Company's settlements, the colonization of New Zealand must be brought to a speedy and disastrous end.

Such a course would inevitably put a stop to the proceedings of the Company, since their whole system is founded on the principle of supplying population to the land which they sell, and would, moreover, cause such loss and discontent among the richer settlers as to deter others from following their steps. It is, therefore, incredible that the mere proclamation-town of Auckland should be maintained as the seat of Government, to the destruction of the real town of Wellington. Supposing that the local Government should impartially consult the general welfare, the rapid prosperity of New Zealand as a British Colony seems to be assured.

The country certainly possesses every natural capability for a series of rich and flourishing settlements. Of the singular excellence of the climate—of the richness of the soil—of the great fecundity of animal life—of the abundance and variety of the resources of the islands, not a doubt is entertained by those whose opinions rest on experience. The mode of colonization adopted by the Government at home insures, if fairly carried out, a regular increase of labour in due proportion to the increase of capital and private pro-

perty in land. For carrying out this system, the Government has adopted as its principal instrument a private company, for whose prudence and energy the past furnishes a guarantee, and whose interests are identical with those of the Colony itself. The revived spirit of English colonization seems to direct its chief force on the "Britain of the South;" and it may be safely presumed that what has been already done in this work, remarkable as it is considering the short time employed, will appear insignificant on being compared with the proceedings of the next few years. For my own part, I will conclude as I began, by saying that the best proof I can give of the sincerity of my opinion as to the bright prospects of New Zealand as a Colony, is the fact of my being but a sojourner here, preparing to return to the place of my former residence in New Zealand.

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